

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SCI-06 FEA-02

AEC-11 AECE-00 DRC-01 /180 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 486

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4961

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, PFOR, MCAP, PK

SUBJ: PAK ATOMIC ENERGY SPOKESMAN CLAIMS GOP HAS REQUIRED
MATERIAL AND KNOWHOW FOR WEAPONS PRODUCTION

REF: ISLAMABAD 4886

SUMMARY: CHAIRMAN OF PAK ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION PRE-
DICTED IN TELECAST INTERVIEW MAY 21 THAT INDIA WOULD GO
ON TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND SAID THAT GOP WAS PUR-
SUING WELL-DEFINED NUCLEAR PROGRAM TO MEET PAKISTAN'S
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"REQUIREMENTS". HE CLAIMED THAT KNOWHOW AND RAW

MATERIALS FOR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT WERE AVAILABLE IN PAKISTAN. THIS MESSAGE SEEMINGLY MADE TO REASSURE PAKISTANI PUBLIC CONCERNS FOR SAFETY PLUS CHALLENGE TO GOI. END SUMMARY.

1. CHAIRMAN OF PAKISTAN'S ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION (PAEC), MENIR AHMAD, IN AN INTERVIEW TELECAST MAY 21, DECLARED THAT "ATOMIC ENERGY IS NECESSARY FOR OUR PROGRESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SURVIVAL," AND PROMISED THAT THE PAEC "WILL CARRY OUT THE TASK ASSIGNED TO IT." SPEAKING THREE DAYS AFTER THE INDIAN EXPLOSION OF A NUCLEAR DEVICE (IN RAJASTHAN NEAR ITS WESTERN BORDER WITH PAKISTAN), HE SAID THAT PAEC'S "PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS...TAKING INTO ACCOUNT INDIA'S INTENTIONS..." HE PREDICTED THAT INDIA WOULD GO ON TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME AND EFFORT, HE SAID.

2. CONCERNING PAKISTAN'S INTENTIONS AND PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, THE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT THE COMMISSION IS "PURSUING A WELL-DEFINED AND COHERENT NUCLEAR PROGRAM WHICH AIMS AT PROVIDING PAKISTAN THE TECHNICAL KNOWHOW IT NEEDS TO MEET ITS REQUIREMENTS." IN ADDITION, PAKISTAN ALREADY HAS SUFFICIENT AMOUNTS OF URANIUM, HE SAID, AND URANIUM DEPOSITS IN DERA GHAZI KHAN AND ELSEWHERE WILL BE EXPLOITED. AHMAD CALLED ON THE NUCLEAR POWERS TO TAKE DECISIVE STEPS TO CLOSE THE "FLOODGATES FOR THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS."

3. COMMENT: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW, HEADLINED AND FRONT-PAGED IN BOTH ENGLISH-LANGUAGE AND VERNACULAR PRESS, CONVEYS IMPRESSION THAT GOP HAS WELL-DEFINED NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND THE POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS DETERRENT TO INDIAN THREAT. IN VIEW OF PUBLIC CONCERN REPORTED REFTEL, EMBASSY SEES THIS MESSAGE AS PRIMARILY INTENDED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION ALTHOUGH, PERHAPS, GOP SEES NO HARM IF A BIT OF BLUSTER DRIFTS ACROSS RAJASTHAN DESERT FOR CONSIDERATION BY GOI. IT IS, PERHAPS, INEVITABLE THAT GOP MUST AT THIS TIME SPEAK AMBIGUOUSLY ON SUBJECT OF ITS NUCLEAR INTENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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GIVEN THE CONFLICTING NEED TO REASSURE CONCERNED PAKISTANI PUBLIC WITH MARTIAL DECLARATIONS AND ON OTHER HAND TO ENCOURAGE INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE WITH STATEMENTS OF PEACEFUL INTENT. THE DILEMMA IS A REAL ONE. LUPPI

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